THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (c) The 'Commission for the Study of Issues concerning the Protection of Labour Rights and Related Matters' is required to submit its recommendations within a period of one year. It is not required to submit an interim report.

(b) The terms of reference of the Commission are as follows :-

I. The Commission would inter-alia study the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions relating to :—

(i) exploitative labour practices which would include prison labour, slave labour and child labour;

(ii) freedom of association and organisation of workers ;

(iii) Practices of collective bargaining by employees and workers; and

(iv) non-discrimination in employment.

II. The Commission would study the response of the Government of India to the International Conventions developed by ILO, would assess the adequacy of such responses and would suggest appropriate modifications in the light of the dynamics of changing conditions pertaining to these matters. The Commission would examine the existing legal framework in these areas to support these standards. The Commission would, in particular, assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the implementation machinery incorporated in these laws. The Commission would also suggest modifications, where necessary, to strengthen the effectiveness of the implementation machinery.

(c) The Commission would develop an action plan for overcoming the identified problems and in adequacies in the area of protection of labour rights in India' taking into account the discussions/ conclusions on these issues including the 'social clause' in the appropriate international forum and evolve suitable recommendations regarding the future course of action by the Government of India.

Duty Free Import of Sugar, LPG and Consumer Goods

751. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had taken a decision to allow duty free import of sugar, LPG etc.;

(b) if so, what were the reasons that weighed favourably with Government to arrive at such a decision ;

(c) the extent to which the decision has proved beneficial to the people of the country in getting these commodities at reasonable rates/prices;

(d) whether there is also a proposal to allow duty free import of cousumer goods ;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) what will be the impact of these imports on the domestic industry ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) to (f) Under the current Export and Import Policy, 1992—97, import of Sugar and LPG is freely permitted by all persons. Raw sugar, refined sugar and white sugar, refined sugar and white sugar are fully exempt from basic Customs duty and additional duty while LPG attracts a basic Custom duty of 15% and additional duty of 10% ad valorem. The review of the Export and Import Policy is a continuous

and on-going exercise and changes are made as and when considered necessary, keeping in view the demand and supply position.

Indo-Israel Trade

752. SHRI SARADA MOHANTY : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the areas in which Indo-Israel trade has been established;

(b) whether Government have a proposal to expand Indo-Israel trade;

(c) if so, the new areas identified therefor; and

(d) the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) The main items of India's exports to Israel at present are gems & jewellery, textiles, agricultural commodities, handicrafts, engineering goods, etc. The main items of our imports from Israel are fertilizers pearls, precious and semi-precious stones, organic/inorganic chemicals, other crude minerals, etc.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) Potential areas identified for expansion of trade and cooperation for mutual benefit include project exports, chemicals and allied products, drugs & pharmaceuticals, electronic items, fruits and vegetables, solar energy, desalination of water, irrigation management, desert farming, telecommunication systems, dairy development, etc.

Decline in Exports

753. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a newsitem in the Statesman of 8th November, 1994 captioned "$ 600 m export loss in October" ;

(b) if so, whether the export figure has declined in the month of October;

(c) whether Government propose to contemplate any serious efforts to cover up the export performance during the remaining period of the current financial year; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Despite adverse effects of plague, the exports estimated at $2198.25 million in October, 1994 are about 27% higher than those during October, 1993. The level of exports in October, 1994 is also higher than those during any month in the current financial year.

(c) and (d) Increasing the levels of exports is a continues and ongoing process. Export performance is closely monitored to take promotional measures and corrective action wherever and whenever require.

Import of Newsprint by STC

754. SHRI V. RAJAN CHELLAPPA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total quantity of newsprint imported by the State Trading Corporation during 1993-94;

(b) whether Government have received any complaint from newspapers regarding non supply of newsprint from STC during the above period;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to provide incentives to